



IMA DECISION MAKING PROCESS

In order to use the Instructional Materials Allotment (IMA) effectively, each district will need to approach the decision-making process systemically, including key stakeholders in the process. The district should view the IMA as a strategic resource that can help achieve the type of learning environment that will challenge and engage 21st century learners. This guide is designed to help a district go through a process to determine how to leverage the IMA to best meet their district's goals.

STEP 1: DETERMINE WHOM TO INCLUDE:

Positions that need to be included in the planning:

- Principals
- Classroom Teachers
- Subject-Area Specialists
- Financial Directors
- Technology Directors (both technical and instructional)
- Textbook Coordinators
- Superintendent

STEP 2: SETTING THE VISION

It is always wise to use guiding principles and visioning documents when making decisions on anything that affect the instructional processes. Consult your district's strategic and technology plan before you begin discussing how you will allocate the resources in the IMA. You might also want to consult some state and national documents. Below are a few documents that would provide your team with some background in this area

- TASA's Creating A New Vision for Public Education
- Partnership for 21st Century Skills
- Texas' Long Range Plan for Technology
- National Education Technology Plan: Transforming American Education: Learning Powered by Technology
- Innovate to Educate: System [Re]Design for Personalized Learning

The links to these documents can be found at <http://www.tcea.org/advocacy/resources/public-policy-issues/ima/decision-making>:

After looking at these documents, use these or similar questions to guide your thought processes.

- How is your district going to address the needs of the digital generation?
- How can instruction be personalized so that the individual needs, interests, and strengths of your students are accommodated?
- How can you take advantage of the vast resources that are available to teachers and students via the Internet?
- How can you use instructional resources to increase 21st century skills such as collaboration, creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, information and media literacy, and technology skills?
- How will you provide teachers and students real-time access to meaningful assessment data to better facilitate each student's experience in the learning process?

STEP 3: DISCUSSING THE VARIABLES THAT MUST BE CONSIDERED

After your team has established a common understanding as to what you envision for your students, use the following questions to guide your decision-making process in determining the mix of materials that will best meet your district's specific needs.

Determining the number of printed materials

- How have the TEKS changed since the last adoption cycle?
- Can the books/materials that the district has in their inventory still be used?
 - If so, what TEKS are not covered that require new instructional materials?
 - If not, is it necessary for every student to have instructional materials both inside and outside of school?
- Do you want to use both printed and electronic materials? What type of split? (A class-set for at school, and electronic materials at home?)
- Have teachers used a printed book in the past for this subject? If not, then what are they using and with the revision of the TEKS will that change?
- Do you have enough books to provide new students as they enroll in your district? If not, then how much money do you need to keep in the IMA to purchase these books to accommodate these students?
- Do you have enough books in your inventory that will accommodate your bilingual students?
- Could you use open-source materials, either printing the materials for each student or accessing them electronically?

Continuing Contracts:

- What consumables do you requisition from EMAT every year?
 - Do you use these materials?
- What online subscriptions do you use annually (as part of an adoption).
 - Have you analyzed the usage to see if it is worth the expense to continue using your IMA for these subscriptions?

Electronic materials accessed at school:

- Do you have access to enough devices for the students to access the content at school?
- Do you have enough bandwidth to access the content (on the Internet or the district network)?
- Are you going to let students bring their own devices to access the content?
- What type of devices can access the content? What are the technical specifications?

Do you have to install any type of software?

Electronic materials accessed outside of school:

- How many of your students do not have adequate access to a computer or bandwidth?
 - How will you accommodate their needs? Provide them with a printed copy of the content? Loan them equipment and advise them where they can access the Internet within the community?
- Will the electronic content be accessible on a variety of types of devices and various platforms?
- Will students need logins and passwords? If so, how will you distribute these to them?
- Will there be any software that has to be loaded onto each of the student's devices? If so, how will this be accommodated?

To help you with the process of thinking through the issues related to the selection of online materials you might find the rubric, Online Materials Guidance, useful. It is located on the TCEA website: (link should be typed here)

Technology needs:

- How did the district use the Technology Allotment in the past?
 - Has the district already found other budget sources for these items?
 - If not, which of these items are non-negotiable?
- What technology staff do you need to fund out of the IMA?
- What equipment do you need to support the instructional processes, including accessing digital content?
- What services are needed to support instruction? (Distance Learning, TxVSN, etc.)

STEP 4: DETERMINING WHAT TO PURCHASE WITH THE IMA.

After you discuss these and other questions you are ready to begin selecting the materials and technology you will need to be funded by the IMA. Remember the IMA funds will roll-forward to the next biennium so it might be prudent to be conservative in your use of the IMA as your district becomes more familiar with the new opportunities and options established in SB 6.